

Testimony before the Appropriations Committee

February 23, 2017

*HB 7027, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.*

Angelina Norris, Windsor CT

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Senator Formica, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

Hi my name is Angelina Norris and I am a registered voter in the town of Windsor, Ct. I am here to talk about the governor's proposed budget cuts for the 2017 fiscal year. I am here to say that I do not want the governor to cut anything to do with mental health and addiction services. We as mental health patients have taken a hard hit when it comes to the governor's budget cuts in the past. I am a mental health patient who is having trouble finding Adult outpatient care because many organizations had to cut back on many of their services. One of the services that I have seen take a direct hit is the outpatient clinics. It is hard for many of us to find therapists and have time to spend with therapists. As it is we have only 45 minutes to talk to our therapist on a given basis and that is usually every two weeks and that is because they are over booked with other clients.

They are over booked with other clients because agencies do not have enough money to hire more therapists. Not only that when clients come in they have to find them a therapist and a psychiatrist which then causes more work overload for therapists and other clients suffer because of it.

I have been in the mental health system since I was a kid and it has helped me a lot. I still do see a therapist on a regular basis but I am able to do a lot of things on my own like going to school to become a teacher, I know drive, and I am able to be an active part of the community. What was able to help me was the mental health system and if the mental health system continues to get cut then how are other people going to become a part of society like I have become. Well maybe they may not be able to become a part of society but for me knowing that people where there who cared and who helped me along the way made a big difference. We are people just like everybody else and there is no reason to continue to cut mental health services.

If we cut mental health services away I feel like we are cutting the rights away from our citizens and the help that they need. We need to be treated fairly and like everybody else in the community.

Another issue that I have is with affordable housing. How is it that people who are on disability cannot get affordable housing or find affordable housing? There is an issue in our state where our income is too low for affordable housing and adequate housing.

As a legislator and a senator you should look at what the budget is in front of you and make a good decisions with what you think is good for the state in this fiscal budget but please look at it carefully and understand that they are people out here suffering and that right now you are the only ones that can help!!!